

THE
HIGH ESTEEM

Which God hath of the Death of his SAINTS.

As it was Delivered in a

SERMON

Preached October 7. 1683. Occasioned by the
Death of the Worshipful

John Hull Esq:

Who Deceased October 1. 1683.

By Samuel Willard Teacher to a Church
in Boston.

Numb. 23. 10. *Let me die the Death of the Righteous
and let my last end be like his.*

De Imperatore Theodosio fertur magis se gaudere quod
membrum ecclesiæ Dei esset, quam caput imperii. Aug.

Boston in New-England Printed by Samuel Green.
for Samuel Sewall: 1683.

HIGH ESTEEM
THE

Which God hath of the Death of his SAINTS.

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Aug. 17, 1908.

Death of the Workman
 Breached October 7, 1882. Occurred at the

John Hall Esq.

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Printed in New-England by Samuel Green, 1788.

PSAL. 116. 15.

Precious in the sight of the Lord is the Death of his Saints.

THis Psalm is wholly Eucharistical; the Psalmist's scope being to profess his endeared love to God, and to excite himself to a grateful acknowledgement of all those Engagements which were lying upon him to express this Love of his in true Thankfulness for all those Kindnesses which he had made him the Subject of: Hence there are two things which he here endeavours.

1. A summary recital of the grounds and reasons: of this Profession; or, what it was that God had so deeply obliged him by, Expressed, Enlarged, Aggravated to *ver. 12.*

2. An earnest Endeavour to Affect and Engage his heart unto suitable gratitude, from hence to the end of the Psalm; wherein he studies and promiseth to let it be seen that he was not stupidly regardless of, but suitably affected with these wondrous benefits of God towards him: where, while he is binding of himself to the payment and performance of sacred and solemn expressions of Thanksgiving, and particular Testimonies of a thankful heart, he draws the knot close and makes it more indissoluble, by reviving the Arguments or Obligations lying upon him, or by chewing upon the consideration of the endeared Love of God discovering it self, both to his People in general, *ver. 15.* and to himself in particular, *ver. 16.*

So that the Words of the Text are a lofty Expression of their deep Interest which the Saints have in Gods Affection, or the high Esteem which he conceives of them, who dearly loves them, and that not only whiles living, but when dying too.

In the Words there are two parts,

1. The Subject about which the Assertion is; The Death of Gods Saints: such a Subject is presumed, for the Scripture doth not pronounce or express the condition of non-entities: And hence we gather these three Conclusions.

1. God hath his Saints in the World; as evil and degenerate as the World is grown, yet there are some Holy Men in it. It is true there is none so holy here as to live without sin; but there are some that are so pure, as to be undefiled in Gods eye and Esteem, *Numb. 23. 21. God hath seen no iniquity in Jacob. Psal. 119. 1. Blessed are the undefiled:* The Word used in our Text, for *Saints* signifies properly one that is precious, kind, bountiful and merciful. The Substantive is most commonly used for Mercy, or pity; and this Word in our Text is Translated *Merciful*, *Isai. 57. 1.* and so divers read it here, *his merciful ones*: others read it, *his beneficent ones*; much to the same purpose: But the *Septuagint* for the most part translate the Word by *ἅγιος* which signifies a *Saint* or an *Holy one*; and so they do in this place; Hence, as some observe, the Posterity of *Jonadab*, the Son of *Rechab*, were, by reason of their strictness or severity of Life, called *Hassidim*, which is the Word used in the Text.

2. Gods Saints must dye. It were superfluous to decipher their happiness in Death, if they were not appointed to be the Subjects of it: the most strict, holy and Exemplary Life of the People of God is no Bail against a bodily death, although Gods Love be such to them, that he will take effectual care about their dying well; yet it is his holy pleasure that they shall taste of that Cup and meet with that common Lot of the children of Men; *Psal. 89. 48. What Man is he that liveth, and shall not see Death? shall he deliver his Soul from the hand of the Grave?*

Grave? and hence we learn, that Death is not in it self a thing so formidable as Men think it to be, but only the manner of dying; it is no hurt to die if we die *Saints*.

3. The *Saints* have a priviledge above other Men in their Death: what this priviledge is will follow; that there is such a thing, the limitation of the general Subject, *Deaths* to this particular Subject, *Saints*, in disposing of it to be capable of the ensuing predication, evidenceth. When the Psalmist hath something worthy and excellent to say about Death, he restrains and bounds it in the *Saints*, q. d. all Men die, but all do not thus die, this is not a common priviledge which I am speaking of, but it is appropriated to the *Saints* of God. Hence, all that would have any advantage above other Men in their dying, must make it their great care and endeavour whiles they are living to be *Saints*.

2. The Predicate of this Subject: *It is precious in the sight of God*; and here is a double excellency of the *Saints*. Death discovered, *viz.*

1. Innate or real; in it self it is precious: for God doth not esteem of things otherwise then they really are; when we hear that he reckons them so, we may conclude that they must be so indeed: the word signifies, weighty, honourable, precious, dear and rare. Death which is in it self an evil thing, when it befalls a Child of God, becomes a thing of very great worth.

2. In Estimation, and that of him who best knows what esteem to put upon things, *viz.* God himself; he doth not tell us that it is so in the sight of Men; for their judgement and verdict would not sufficiently determine the question; for, as for wicked men, they account the *Saints* lives to be contemptible, and their Death inglorious: and as for good men they are fallible, liable to mistakes; and hence their judgement is not by it self satisfying to Faith, nor may we build any conclusion upon the credit of the best of men: but God judgeth aright, he knows and speaks the truth, and his testimony

mony is to be taken : the Phrase [*In the sight*] signifies the judgement, knowledge, and account : *q. d.* thus it is to God, he who sees all things, and discerns their issues, he reckons it to be so : There are divers thoughts among *Interpreters* about the meaning of this Expression, or in what sence the Psalmist intends that their death is precious in the sight of God, which what it is most likely to be, will follow to be considered : Hence ;

Doct. *The Death of God's Saints is in his account or esteem a thing very precious :*

God sets an high price, not only upon the *Lives*, but upon the *Deaths* too of his Children : they are dear and honourable to him, not living only, but dying also.

For the clearing up of this Truth we may consider,

1. Who are those *Saints* of God of whom this is asserted ?
2. What is implied in their Death, *being precious in God's sight*?
3. Whence it comes to pass that it is so ?

1. *Who are those Saints whose death is thus precious ?*

A. I have already hinted the meaning of the Word, and shall not need to make many Discourses upon the thing, or enter a treatise about the quality and kind of Sanctity. There is none on this side the Grave is so holy, but to have in him some defilement, none so clean but there may be some spots and blemishes found in him, *Eccles. 7. 20.* *There is not a just Man upon Earth that doth good and sinneth not :* But a Saint in a Gospel sence may be described to be One who being powerfully wrought upon in effectual vocation, and therein converted thoroughly unto God, hath the Grace of Sanctification wrought in him, and the Spirit of Holiness given to him, to dwell in him, and to purge his Heart and Conscience. There are *Saints* in Heaven, and they are just Men made perfect ; and there are *Saints* on the Earth too, *Psal. 16. 3.* *To the Saints that are in the Earth :* and these though not at present perfected, are yet perfecting. They are such whom

whom the Grace of God hath taught in part; and is daily further teaching those Lessons, *Tit. 2. 11, 12. To deny ungodliness and worldly Lusts, and to live Soberly, Righteously, and Godly in this present world.* They do not ly wallowing in the mire of Sin, nor delighting themselves in such courses as are provoking to God; but are in heart, soul and spirit devoted unto him and his service; seeking his honour, studying his glory, contriving how they may best serve their Generation to his praise. In a word, every one that by the power of Gods Spirit is taken out of the World, and made a true Believer, is also a Saint in an Evangelical account: Conversion and Sanctification go together inseparably: Effectual vocation both designs and produceth Sanctification, *1 Cor. 1. 2. Called to be Saints,* and such as these are, are therefore called the Saints of God.

1. Because God hath chosen and separated them for himself, and his own service: *Psal. 4. 8. Know that the Lord hath set apart him that is godly for himself.* He hath taken them out of the World, and consecrated them to an higher and more noble Employment than such as the rest of Man-kind are engaged in: now whatsoever is devoted to any special service of God, is therein said to be Sanctified; for to sanctifie, is to separate from common, and dedicate to special, divine use and services: upon this account the Tabernacle and Temple, the Altar, the Vessels, the Priests, the Levites, the People of *Israel* were accounted Holy; and the more separated they were, the more holy were they reputed to be.

2. Because they stand nearly related to Christs Holiness; not only Christs Righteousness, as it stands to answer the Law for them in way of Justification, is imputed unto them; but his Holiness also is imputed unto them for Sanctification; there is a relative Sanctity upon every true Believer; and hence Christ is said to be made unto them *Sanctification*, *1 Cor. 1. 30.* the precious Priests Robes of their elder Brother are put upon them. In the Ceremonial Law,

Law,

Law, the Water of Purification, by being sprinkled upon the persons and instruments that were for the service of the Sanctuary, Sanctified them : thus the blood of Christ sprinkled upon a Child of God, renders him pure in God's Holy Eyes.

3. Because they have the inchoations of inherent *Sanctity* in them : there is a real formal Holiness in every true Believer, and though imperfect in degrees, yet perfect in parts: the Holy Spirit of God given to, and dwelling in the People of God, works them up to a Conformity to himself, and renders them like unto the Holy God; and hence it is, that Believers are said to be *partakers of the divine nature*, 1 Pet. 1. 4. the Lord Jesus Christ hath wrought them up unto Holiness, Hence that 1 Thess. 4. 3. *For this is the Will of God, even your Sanctification*, and that verse 7. *For God hath not called us unto Uncleanness, but unto Holiness*.

4. Because they are growing up to, and designed for perfection of Holiness : Grace inherent is Holiness begun, and founded in the Believer, but they grow in it, *Psal. 92. 12, 13. The Righteous shall flourish &c.* and as the Lord Jesus Christ hath laid the foundation in them by effectual vocation, so his intention is to fit them up for himself, so as that they shall be every way like unto him, and this is by making them to be without spot or wrinkle, *Eph. 5. 27.*

2. What is implied in their Death being precious in the sight of God? or wherein he makes it appear so to be?

A. 1. Negatively; we are not to suppose that God takes delight in putting of his Servants to Death; or that their Death, as such contents him, or is a pleasure to him; Death in its own nature is an evil; it is the fruit of the Curse brought in by sin, and for God, to will Death as so to his People, were not an expression of his Love; but Displeasure; But

2. Positively; and here Observe,

1. Some read the Word here [*Heavy*] and take the meaning

meaning to be, that God takes the Death of his *Saints*, especially; when it is procured by the means of their *Enemies*, very grievously or heavily; it is such a thing as he cannot tell how to bear: and that *David* speaks this of his own experience: for when *Saul*, when *Absalom*, when *Achitophel*, had contrived his Death, and sought wayes how they might effect it, God was very angry, and would not suffer it; yea, manifestly discovered his deepest displeasure against them, in that by signal judgements he destroyed each of them.

2. Others read it [*Rare and Dear*] and understand it, that, because such things as are dear to us, we are not wont to leave or commit to the dispose of others; therefore *David* intends, that God doth not easily or often grant Wicked Men their desires upon his *Saints*, or suffer them to take away their lives; and that *David* draws this general Conclusion to comfort others withal, from the great Experience which he had had of manifold and strange Deliverances: But,

3. The most comprehensive meaning of this Expression may be this, viz. That God takes as special and weighty care about the Death of his *Saints*, as men are wont to do about those things that are of greatest worth and value in their esteem: the *Septuagint* Translateth it by *τιμω*, Honourable, intimating that God puts great honour upon his dying *Saints*; And this esteem discovers it self:

4. In this all-wise and careful timing of their Death: He takes order that his People shall alwayes die in the best time for them: it may be a bad time for the World to lose them in, but it is a good time for them to leave it in. Hence,

5. Till the fit time is come, He secures their Lives for them, and hath oftentimes almost miraculously so that all the Malice, Rage, Spite and Power of their *Enemies* shall not be able to effect it; and whiles they are thus laying their heads together, plotting and contriving how to bring it about, God laughs at them, *Psal. 37. v. 13. The Wicked plots against the Just.*

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Lord shall laugh at him. How many consultations and endeavours were there against the Life of *Athanasius* of old, and of *Luther* in later times, and yet they could not obtain to cut short one of their dayes appointed.

2. When their fit time is come, and they are prepared for it: God mercifully taketh order about their dying, and makes their Death to be such, as it shall be a full witness of his dearest respect unto them; and hence we may observe a threefold circumstance of the time of the Saints dying; one of which is alwayes accommodable thereunto: God therefore takes them away, either,

1. When they are despised or undervalued in the World: when Men grow weary of them, and their company is a trouble to them; now God will not suffer them to be troubled with them any longer, but sends to fetch them away to a place where they are better thought of, and shall meet with more worthy entertainment. It is Recorded of those Worthies, *Heb. 11. 38.* That the World was not worthy of them; they were too good for them, and they did not know their Excellency, and therefore thought meanly of them; and now God will not let them enjoy them any longer, he calls them home.

2. When there are evil and calamitous times hastening upon the place where they live: they are taken away from the wrath to come, *Isai. 57. 1.* God now takes them off, and this he doth not only to make a way for his wrath, by taking them out of the Gap, where they stood to prevent ruine; but also to free them from those Sorrows and distressing Calamities which else they must needs undergo; this was a mercy promised to tender-hearted *Josiah*, *2. King. 22. ult.* Thou shalt be gathered to thy Fathers in peace, and thine eyes shall not see all the evil which I will bring upon this place.

3. When they have done the work of their Generation: God hath in his holy Decree laid out what work every one of his Saints shall do for him in this World; and a Saint would not desire

desire to be here any longer than he hath some work to do for God; Hence, when they have finished their course, he brings them to the Crown: thus we read of David, *Act. 13.36. When he had served his own Generation, by the Will of God, he fell asleep.* When a Believers work is done, its his priviledge to go to rest.

2. *In his special care about the manner of their Death:* For,

1. *He affords them his special presence to carry them through all the conflicts which they have with Death, and with all their Enemies, who in that hour assault them.* He makes all their Bed for them in their sickness, he visits them with his Holy Spirit, comforteth and refresheth them against all their fears, bruifeth Satan for them under their feet, sends his Angels to strengthen them against all their Temptations, and support them under all their Agonies, and is very careful that they shall in no wise be tempted above what they are able.

2. *He takes order that they shall die in peace;* whatever Troubles they have been which they have met with in their lives, yet they shall meet perfect peace in their Death, *Psal. 37.37. Take notice of the perfect man, mark the upright, for the latter end of that man is peace.* Death comes not armed with a sting against them, but the sting is taken out, and the poyson of it removed, *1 Cor. 15.55. Oh Death! where is thy sting?* it comes not as an Officer of Justice to Arrest them, but as a friendly Messenger to invite them into their Fathers presence, to the Court of a reconciled God, and tender-hearted Father, and the kind embraces of a loving Redeemer.

3. *He orders them so to die as to leave a sweet remembrance behind them.* Wicked men possibly may endeavour, by throwing dirt at them, to blemish their Names, and yet God often makes them speak well of his dead *Saints*, and to build the Tombs of the Prophets whom they have killed: But however, in the hearts of the faithful they have an honourable esteem, a worthy Monument, *Psal. 12.6. The Righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance. Prov. 10.7. The memory of the just is blessed.*

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3. *In the care which he takes of them after their death:* those that were dear to us in their lives, are not easily forgotten by us when they are dead, nor are the *Saints* by God, but effectually taken care for; For,

1. *Their dust is not reputed by him as common dust, but they are laid up by his care, kept under his eye, and preserved by his powerful providence, as precious Relicks, till they be brought forth again in the day of Resurrection.* He lays them to rest in peace and safety, *Isai. 57. 2. They shall rest in their Beds;* their Bodies which were made Temples of the Holy Ghost, and Members of Jesus Christ, are not now rejected as *worthless things*, but are laid up in God's Cabinet, and that, with far more tender care than we do the most estimable jewel; and Hence their Flesh resteth in hope, *Psal. 16. 9. dying Believers* can in Faith recommend their dead Bodies to the Grave, in joyful expectation of an happy return, and all the rage of Men and Devils shall never be able to prevent this.

2. *Their precious Souls, dearly beloved of the Lord Jesus, are safely guarded, and surely transported to a place of eternal honour and rest:* The Saints die to go to, and to be with Christ which is best of all; they die that they may live for ever. When a Saint of God dies, there is a glorious Convoy of blessed Angels; sent from Heaven to attend his departure, the Angels carried *Lazarus* into *Abraham's bosom*, *Luk. 16. 22.* and this is done both for their honour, and their safety; they carry their Souls out of the reach of Men and Devils, into the presence Chamber of the great God, to him in whose presence is fulness of joys, and at whose right hand are pleasures for evermore, to receive an incorruptible and never fading Crown of Glory; and though Legions of Devils enterpose, and seek to stop up the way, they shall never be able to obstruct their passage, nor from that time for evermore do them any the least displeasure. Thus precious in Gods account is the death of every one of his Saints.

3. *Whence it comes to pass that it is so?*

4. It

A. It Flows not from any merit of theirs; a Saint aspires not to challenge any favour from God upon the score of his own deservings, but when he hath done all, acknowledgeth himself an unprofitable Servant, and his best Righteousness to be but as filthy Rags: but it proceeds from Gods infinitely free Grace, and if we look upon that, we shall find manifold reason why the Saints Death is precious in God's sight: *viz.*

1. *Because he hath loved them in Christ with an everlasting Love;* where there is love, it renders that object beloved, precious to him that loves it; though another can discern no excellency or worthiness in it, and may thereupon wonder what he loves it for, yet love apprehends it to be of worth: now God hath loved his *Saints* from everlasting, *Jer. 31. 3.* and inasmuch as that which is everlasting, is by consequence immutable; hence this love of his abides to, in, and after death, and makes it precious.

2. *Because they are his:* Propriety and Peculiarity engage the care, and excite the affections to a suitable proportion unto the Subject; the *Saints* are God's *Peculium*, they are called *his Anointed, and his Prophets*, *Psal. 105. 15.* they are firmly and closely united unto him through Christ, and Death doth not dissolve that indissoluble Bond; dead Believers continue in union with Christ, and shall his own die then, and he not be deeply concerned in it? it cannot be.

3. *Because they are Saints:* They are Holy Ones, such as are sanctified by his Grace, and so are made precious: there is a Worth put upon, and a Worth put into a Believer that makes him more precious than the Gold of *Ophir*; it makes him a Jewel, a Pearl of great price; and for that reason he must not be lost, but bound up, *Mal. 3. 17. They shall be mine, saith the Lord, in that day when I make up my Jewels.*

4. *Because the Death of the Saints is of great and high concern:* For,

1. *There is much of the Glory of God is concerned in and about their*

their Death: they do not only glorifie him in their *Lives*, but in their *Death* too, *Joh. 21. 19.* *This he said, signifying by what Death he should glorifie God.* Never doth the Box of their sweet Ointments give a better favour, than when the Case is broken: the *Saints* do not go out like a Candle in a stinking Snuff, but they ascend like *Frankincense* or *sweet Incense*, in a Cloud of fragrant Smoke.

2. *Their eternal being in another World bears a Relation to their Death*: Of all the changes which they pass through, this is in some respect the greatest: The Death of *Believers* is appointed to be the narrow passage through which they are to be conducted from their *Earthly Cottage* to a *Palace of Kingly Glory*: It is the Ceremony in which an honourable discharge is given to these faithful *Souldiers* from their fore Warfare here below, to ride home to their *City* in triumph: It is their disbanding from the *Church Militant*, to go to and become *Members* of the great *Sanhedrim* of the *Church Triumphant*, and this is a great and a notable transaction and must needs therefore be precious, and taken such care for, as that it may answer in glory to the great design of it.

USE I. For Information: We may hence collect,

1. That the Title of a Saint is a most honourable Title: or that it is the greatest honour and priviledge in the World to be a Saint; this is the honour that all *His Saints* have, that their Death is precious in His sight: and there is no *Worldly Title*, though never so glittering and glorious, that involves in it such a priviledge as this is: they that have them may live in great splendor among Men, and be followed with the stately Solemnities of Funeral Pomp to their House of Darkness: but in God's account (which is alone to be set by) they are in their Deaths of no more value than so many Beasts, *Psal. 94. 20.* *Man that is in honour, and understandeth not, is like the Beasts that perish.* This Dignity is not annexed or appropriated to *Imperial Crowns*, to *Robes of Sta*

State, or to the *Thrones of Kingdoms*, but only to a Saint: who then would not labour to be of that number?

2. That *God's Saints serve a good Master*: Those that serve *Earthly Potentates*, though for a while they may be had in high esteem with them, and be greatly set by, yet seldom but they have their *quietus est* before they die; when they grow unapt for Service, it is thought high time to lay them by: however when Death comes they are then left and soon forgotten: but the Servants of the most High are never forgotten; God that loved them living, loves them dying too: It was a lamentable, but true saying of a great, yet miserable Prelate; *If I had served God as faithfully as I have done my King, he would not now have left me*: what Fools then and Mad-men are they that relinquish the service of God, to serve the lusts of Men, who care but to serve their own turns of them, and then will relinquish them?

3. That *Death cannot make a Believer miserable, but must needs render him happy*. Those precious thoughts which God hath conceived in his own breast for dying *Saints*, cannot chuse but break forth into suitable operations for them; if their death be *precious in God's sight*, it must needs bring forth precious fruits for them, and such as shall fill them with perfect Felicity. Hence of all the Men in the World the Saint is the Man that hath the least need of being afraid to die: this glorious promise is a Believers plentiful security against all the frightful menaces of the King of Terrors; and it may light a Child of God into and through this dark valley, *Psal. 16. 9, 10. Therefore my heart rejoiceth, and my Glory is glad &c.*

4. That the Death of a Saint calls for solemn and serious observation by the living. It is an awful thing for a Righteous man to die, and no man lay it to heart; for the Godly, to be taken away, and none consider it: if the *Saint's* death be so precious in the sight of God, then it is certain that there are great and weighty reasons in the very circumstances of their dying which Men ought to regard: there is a great change

change made in that place from whence the poorest and meanest Saint is removed: there is no such desolation and impoverishing brought upon a Land, as when Death comes commissioned by God, to sieze, gather up, and carry away from us those Jewels; one of them is of more worth than ten thousand of wicked Men, and a greater loss it is (whether Men will believe it or no) to be stript of one of them, then of a multitude of those unprofitable things that cumber the Ground, and are a burden to the Earth they tread upon.

USE II. For Exhortation: Learn we hence these Practical Lessons.

1. *When the Saints die let us mourn:* And there is no greater Argument to be found that we should excite our selves to mourn by, then the remembrance that they were *Saints*: it should more effect our hearts at the thoughts of this that they were *Saints*, then that they were our Father, or Mother, or Brethren, or nearest or dearest Friends, for this is that which makes their loss to be greater than any other Relation doth or can; others are natural, but these are pious Tears that are shed upon this account: Another Man may be a private loss when he is gone, his Family or his Neighbours, or Consorts may miss him; but a *Saint*, though he be a private Christian, is yet, when he dies a, publick loss, and deserves the *tears of Israel*; how much more than when he hath been a Saint providentially put into a capacity of being, and by Grace helpt and enabled to be a publick benefit by the Orb he moved in? when a Saint *Dies* there is manifold ground of Mourning; there is then a Pillar pluckt out of the Building, a Foundation Stone taken out of the Wall, a Man removed out of the Gap; and now it is to be greatly feared that God is departing, and *Calamities* are coming, and are not these things to be lamented?

2. *When the Saints die beware of irregular Mourning:* though we are to lament their Death, yet we must beware that

that it be after the right manner : a dying Saint may say to his weeping Friends that stand round about, wringing their hands, after the same Language that Christ did to those weeping Women, *Luk. 23. 27, 28, 29. Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but for yourselves, and your Children, &c.* It is we and not they that are indangered and endamaged by it : we may therefore weep for our selves, and there is good reason for it, but to mourn for them is superfluous. Is their Death precious in Gods? let it not be miserable in our esteem: and tell me you whose hearts throb, and eyes run over with sorrow, is it not a precious thing to be asleep in Jesus? to ly in the lap of his providence, and rest from the labours and sorrows of a troublesome World? to be laid out of the noise of the whistling Winds, and feel none of the impetuosity of those Storms and Tempests that are blowing abroad? to be out of the sight and hearing of the rolling and dashing waves of the roaring Sea? to sleep out the rest of the tempestuous night of this World, standing in the inner Chamber of Gods Providence, in answer to that sweet invitation? *Isai. 26. 22. Come my People, enter into thy Chambers, and shut thy doors about thee, &c.* To ly in Christ's Bosom, and be ravished with his dearest love, and most intimate Embraces? to see none of those sorrowful changes that are coming on the places which they once lived in, nor any more to be within the reach of the calumny and rage of their spiteful Enemies? surely these Notes do not suit with an Elegiack strain; and yet this is the comfort which is given them to feed upon, whose dead Relations and Friends were Saints upon the earth.

3. *Is the death of the Saints precious in Gods sight? let it be so in ours too.* They are not to be accounted for contemptible things which God sets an high value upon; and it is our wisdom to think and speak of persons and things as God doth : we ought not to slight the death of the righteous, and speak meanly of it, as of a thing that is little momentous : I

am sure their arrival at Heaven is there taken notice of as a thing worthy of observation ; and shall not their departure be regarded ? they are welcomed into the Palace of delight with *Panegyrics* ; and shall then be hence dismissed with no more but a sorry saying, there is now a good Man gone, and he will be missed in the Family, or the Church to which he once belonged ? we should embalm the memory of the Saints with the sweet smelling Spices that grew in their own Gardens, and pick the chiefest Flowers out of those Beds to strew their Graves withal ; we should remember and make mention of them with honourable thoughts and words : and though it be now grown a Nick-name of contempt among wicked and prophane Men, yet count it the most orient Jewel in their Crown, the most odoriferous and pleasant Flower in their Garland, that we can say of them that they lived and died Saints ; all other Eschutcheons will either wear away, or be taken down, every other monument will become old, and grow over with the Moss of time, and their Titles, though cut in Brass, will be Canker-eaten and illegible : this onely will endure and be fresh and Flourishing, when Marble it self shall be turned into common dust.

Such an one it is whom we have now lost ; and Oh that we knew how great a loss we have sustained in him ! they are little things to be put into the account, and weigh but light in the commendations we have to give him ; to say, This Government hath lost a Magistrate ; this Town hath lost a good Benefactor ; this Church hath lost an honourable Member ; his Company hath lost a worthy Captain ; his Family hath lost a loving and kind Husband, Father, Master ; the Poor have lost a Liberal and Merciful Friend ; that nature had furnished him with a sweet and affable Disposition, and even temper ; that Providence had given him a prosperous and Flourishing Portion of this Worlds Goods ; that the love and respect of the People had lifted him up to places of honour and preferment ; this, this out-shines

shines them all; that he was a Saint upon Earth; that he lived like a Saint here, and died the precious Death of a Saint; and now is gone to rest with the Saints in glory: this hath raised those Relicks of his above common dust, and made them precious dust. When Conscience of duty stimulated me to perform my part of his Exequies, and put me upon it to do him honour at his Death; methoughts Justice required, and envy it self would not nibble at this Character: and if the Tree be to be known by its Fruits, his works shall praise him in the Gates: For his constant and close secret Communion with God (which none but Hypocrites are wont to do with the sound of a Trumpet) such as were most intimate with him, have known and can testify: the care which he had to keep up constant Family Worship, in reading of the Scriptures, and praying in his Family (from which no business publick or private could divert him) was almost now unparallel'd; the honourable respect he bore to God's holy Ordinances, by diligently attending upon them, and esteeming highly of God's Servants for their work sake, and care that he used to live the Truths which he heard from time to time, was very singular: the exemplariness of his Life and Converse among Men, and the endeavours which he used to shew forth the Graces of the Spirit, not being ashamed of Christ, nor being willing to be a shame unto him; let all that knew him bear witness of: his meek boldness in reproving Sin, and gentle faithfulness in endeavouring to win Sinners as he had opportunity, is known to such as lay in his way: His constancy in all these whiles times have changed, and many Professors have degenerated, when he strove to grow better as the times grew worse, will speak the sincerity of his Profession: his living above the World, and keeping his heart disengaged, and his mind in Heaven, in the midst of all outward occasions and urgency of Business, bespoke him not to be of this World, but a Pilgrim on the Earth, a Citizen of Heaven: In a word, he was a true *Nathaniel*.

But God hath taken him from us, and by this stroke given us one more sad prognostick of misery a coming : when there are but a few Saints in the World, and those die apace too, what is to be thought to be at the door ? I dare say his Death was precious in Gods sight, and he had some holy end in taking him away just now, who might probably have lived many years, and done much more service for God in his Generation : I shall not make it my work to Prophecie ; the Lord grant we do not all know it too soon to our cost. Mean time let us have such in remembrance, and labour to be followers of them who through Faith and Patience do now inherit the promises, and that will be the best way to divert the Omen : Let us account the *Saints* precious whiles they live, and God will not begrutch them to us : but if we by contempt, obloquy, and wickedly grieving their *Righteous Souls*, make their lives a burden to them ; if they cannot live in honour among Men, they shall die in favour with God, and he will make their death a precious gain to them, though it be a direful presage of a great inundation of sad Calamities coming upon those whom they leave behind them.

IN

IN OBITUM LUCTUOSISSIMUM VIRI VERE
GENEROSI, PII, PLURIMISQ; ALIIS NOMI-
NIBUS HONORANDI

JOHANNIS HULL ARMIGERI,

Cum Dignitate pari degentis, in Summo Dynastarum
NOV-ANGLORUM ordine, dum vixit, Pius.

NEs ver perpetuum voluit Deus esse; perennem
Noluit æstatem: sed & Autumni quoque tempus
Cedere; quo jussit ver, æstatemque, coronam,
Flores & fruges, deponere; cumq; nivali
Vinclo ut tristis Hyems coustringeret omnia: Quo me
Fert animus vereor, ne Tu quoq; terra Nov' Angla,
Experiare vices Anni; cui præteriere
Floribus ornatum ver, & tua frugibus æstas.
Quamque diu Autumni nobis inimica fuere
Tempora! dum Proceres divos, sanctosq; Prophetas,
Innumerosque pios, mēsem nec adhuc satis amplam,
Ipse Deus reputans demēssit: Unde Nov' Angli
Nostratem hunc Procerum comitem, sociumq; fidelem
Lugent; (Quem Deus hinc, jam nunc subduxit in altum
Æthera) conclamant; merito lugendus es, HULLI:
Unus de fulcris, ad propugnacula fixis,